

## **Congressman Travis Childers Announces Blue Dog Principles for Bipartisan, Fiscally Responsible Health Care Reform**

### ***Principles Address Costs for Small Businesses, Access in Rural Communities***

May 13, 2009

Washington, DC - Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS), a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition Health Care Task Force, today announced the official Blue Dog Health Care Reform Principles for the 111th Congress. The principles, developed by the Task Force and adopted by the full Coalition, promote bipartisanship and fiscal responsibility as Congress begins to address the urgent need for reform of the nation's failing health care system. They also stress the need to tackle high health care costs for small businesses and inadequate access to care in rural communities.

"Many hard working North Mississippians struggle to obtain quality health care for themselves and their families," said Congressman Childers. "Our nation's current health care system is broken, and we are long overdue for comprehensive health care reform in this country. Successful health care reform will protect patient choice, preserve competition, and incorporate bipartisan efforts. That being said, we don't need to throw the baby out with the bathwater. We need to look for savings within the current system as a first step towards approaching reform in a fiscally responsible way.

"The survival of small businesses and the health of rural communities depend on effective health care reform. Lack of affordable care is one of the major reasons why many small businesses - the backbone of our local economies - are forced to cut jobs or close down. Rural America has its own set of health care challenges, primarily issues of access, that must be addressed by any piece of comprehensive reform legislation.

"I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the House and Senate, as well as the administration, towards reaching a successful, bipartisan, and fiscally responsible solution to our current health care crisis that will lower costs for small businesses

and provide accessible care in rural communities.”

Specifically, the principles address the Blue Dogs' belief that fundamental reform of the nation's health care system is needed to control rising health care costs, increase quality and value, and improve access to coverage and care. Members also emphasized the importance of preserving patient choice and maintaining competition within the marketplace.

The complete Blue Dog Health Care Reform Principles are attached.

The Blue Dog Health Care Task Force membership also includes: Rep. Mike Ross, Chairman, Rep. Marion Berry, Vice-Chairman, Rep. Parker Griffith, Vice-Chairman, Rep. Zack Space, Vice-Chairman, Rep. John Barrow, Rep. Jim Cooper, Rep. Jim Matheson, Rep. Mike Michaud, Rep. Collin Peterson, Rep. Earl Pomeroy, Rep. John Tanner, Rep. Mike Thompson and Rep. Charlie Wilson.

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